

the Schiff amendment on yesterday, July 14, 2011, to the Energy and Water bill that was under consideration. I incorrectly voted "no."

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I yield to the majority leader, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), for the purpose of asking about the schedule for the coming week.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Madam Speaker, on Monday the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and at 2 p.m. for legislative business with votes postponed until 6:30 p.m. This is a change from the legislative schedule that was announced at the end of last week. We will be sending out an announcement shortly so that all Members are aware of this change. Again, Madam Speaker, the House will now convene on Monday of next week, not Tuesday.

It is critical, Madam Speaker, that we solve our Nation's fiscal problem and intend to schedule the House's legislative business as intended to accomplish that goal.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for the morning-hour and noon for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m. on Friday.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few bills under suspension of the rules on Monday, which will be announced by the close of business today. I do not expect any other legislative business besides suspensions on Monday.

On Tuesday, the House will consider the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, which would provide the President with an increase in the debt ceiling so long as cuts are made in the short term, spending caps are put in place over the coming years, and a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution is adopted so that we never find ourselves in this position again. I would encourage as many Members as possible to participate in this important debate on Tuesday.

During the remainder of the week, the House will consider legislation relating to the expiring authorization of the FAA, a series of bills reported by the Financial Services Committee that deal with the impending transfer of authority to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and, finally, the Legislative Branch appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his information.

I would say that it's my understanding now that we are, as the gen-

tleman has pointed out, going to be meeting on Monday, and we will be voting on Monday at 6:30 rather than commencing on Tuesday at 6:30. The gentleman has pointed out that that's to accommodate the challenge that confronts us in the crisis that we have been put in with reference to assuring, A, that America does not default on its bills, and that we continue to pursue efforts to bring the deficit down and the debt under control.

I say to my friend that it is late. He is right. We should confront this situation. We on numerous occasions, of course both the gentleman and I, have voted in the past to extend the debt limit so that America paid the bills that it has incurred.

The gentleman also notes that a piece of legislation was brought to the floor to ensure that we pay our bills. It was brought to the floor with the express intention by the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee that it be defeated, and of course it was defeated, and all of your members voted against it, although over half of my members voted to make sure we pay our bills so that we did not get to this position.

The gentleman and I have been involved in efforts to reach agreement with the President, with the Senate, and with ourselves, with both sides of the aisle, so that we could not only provide for America paying its bills, which if it doesn't will have very serious consequences to every household in America, every 401(k) pension program in America—and the gentleman and I agree, and everybody at the table with the President agreed, that allowing America to default on its bills was not something that any of us believed was a policy that was appropriate.

I say to my friend, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, we've been confronted with this challenge for a long period of time. It was my understanding that you were going to bring to the floor next week a balanced budget amendment, which was announced and which I thought was coming and which we had told our members was coming. You have now substituted for that, as I understand it, am I correct, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act?

To my understanding, there is no text for that act available at this time. Is that accurate? Am I correct that there is no text yet available for that bill?

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I would say back to the gentleman that the bill is currently being drafted and will be posted online later this evening, consistent with our 3-day layover requirement.

□ 1250

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comment.

Given the fact, as the gentleman pointed out, that this crisis has been known to us for over 5, 6 months now, that we were going to confront this, I understand that in the Cut, Cap, and Balance pledge that has been put for-

ward—I don't know whether it's going to be put forward in the legislation—but the pledge says that your side or—excuse me—the people who sign the pledge, whatever side they're on, are going to "oppose any debt limit increase unless all three of the following conditions have been met:"

One, "Substantial cuts in spending that will reduce the deficit next year and thereafter." It seems to me that we passed a budget through this House that does that. It doesn't reach balance, of course, until some 30 years from now. Secondly, it says, as a condition for voting for a debt extension, "Enforceable spending caps that will put Federal spending on a path to a balanced budget." As you know, we've had discussions in the White House on caps and what they apply to, whether they are a percentage of GDP or they're actually caps in spending, which obviously escalate the denigration of the ability to deliver services over the years, depending upon the flexibility that's incorporated. I haven't seen the legislation, of course. And then thirdly, on balanced, "congressional passage." Then in parentheses it says, "not mere support." Now, I know there are some people on this floor who have signed this agreement, so I presume that they're not going to vote to make sure America pays its bills on August 3. "Congressional passage of a Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution—but only if it includes both a spending limitation and a super-majority for raising taxes, in addition to balancing revenues and expenses."

Now, I presume that that requirement will have to come, according to this pledge, to get votes which are included in this Cut, Cap, and Balance pledge. Does the gentleman believe that the second two at least—one could argue that we've already done the first in terms of making substantial cuts and that we've discussed agreeing on making substantial cuts, but that the second two conditions cannot possibly be met between now and August 2?

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman that, as he has heard me say before in those meetings and on this floor, I don't want to pass August 2 without increasing the debt.

Mr. HOYER. I understand that.

Mr. CANTOR. I, as well as the gentleman, understand that there is a lot of uncertainty if that were to happen, a lot of risks associated with that, risks that I am not willing to take.

To the gentleman's suggestion that it is imperative that we do that above all else, I would also add to that, it is imperative that we demonstrate that we can arrive at meaningful solutions to the current fiscal crisis the country is facing. That is what the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act tries to achieve. It offers a way for us to cut spending in a meaningful way this year and throughout the budget window. It also suggests ways to enforce discretionary levels so that Congress can actually begin to do

what all of us would like to see us do, which is to stop spending the money that we don't have.

The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act also provides for caps on total spending levels recommended in our budget resolution. These levels are spending as a share of GDP, and it provides, lastly, for ensuring that even beyond the 10 years that we actually can get back to balance. That's what the people of the country want. I know that the gentleman shares with me a desire to manage this situation back down to balance. So I'm hopeful that the gentleman and his colleagues on the other side of the aisle take a look at this legislation. As I have said to the gentleman, it will be posted online to comply with our 3-day layover requirement to provide adequate notice to the public and Members.

Mr. HOYER. I'm not sure the gentleman answered my question with condition two and three of the Cut, Cap, and Balance pledge. Again, I haven't read the legislation. So I see the pledge. I'm not sure what's in the legislation.

I thank the gentleman for his observation that we need a meaningful and, I would say, robust addressing of the problem that confronts us. In fact, as you know, because we have discussed it at the White House for 4 days now, from Sunday night through last night—I guess 5 days—the President of the United States has been indicating that we need—he calls it a “big”—a grand design, if you will, along the lines that have been suggested by two of the commissions, which on a bipartisan basis recommended a grand design. That grand design would have reached at least \$4 trillion in deficit reduction and debt reduction, and, in fact, that is a figure somewhere close to the budget that was passed through this House. I might say to the gentleman parenthetically that it's my understanding that the Cut, Cap, and Balance might get closer to the RSC numbers than your budget number that was passed here. The RSC number that I refer to, of course, was the amendment that was defeated on this floor by one vote.

But I would say to the gentleman that the President wants to do a grand design to reduce that deficit not by \$1 trillion or \$2 trillion or \$3 trillion but by \$4 trillion. There was a commission or a group—the “Biden group” we call it—in which the gentleman participated. There were other discussions between your Speaker and the President all looking at achieving a large deficit reduction. The gentleman at some point in time decided that was not something that he wanted to continue working on and suggested that it be, I suppose, pushed up the line, and it was. So I said, the President was for a grand design. The leader of the Senate, Mr. REID, was for that. Mr. DURBIN was for it. Ms. PELOSI was for it. I was for it, and the Vice President was for it. But unfortunately, we couldn't proceed on

that discussion in a successful way, at least, because the gentleman observed and his colleagues observed that, as long as there were any revenues attached to that, it would not be acceptable to your side of the aisle, notwithstanding that every bipartisan commission that has dealt with this issue has indicated that it needed to be a balanced package, that it needed to include substantial cuts, that it needed to deal with discretionary spending, defense spending, entitlement spending, and that it needed to deal with tax expenditures.

The gentleman says correctly that we want to balance our revenues with our expenditures. The problem is, if you keep cutting revenues, you're just going to be chasing yourself down. Obviously, you want to bring revenue rates down. I hope we can do that. But if we bring them down to a place where we don't have the money to pay for what we buy—which is, of course, what happened in this past decade—then we will be confronted with a situation that the gentleman wants to avoid, and that is: raising the debt limit. What we have done over the last 10 years is buy more than we can afford; therefore, we have a debt. That's why the gentleman, as I say, voted for extending the debt limit. That's why I voted for it.

I will tell the gentleman that I have a Gallup Poll here that says, “Seventy-four percent of the Republicans agree that a responsible deficit reduction plan should include both tax increases and spending cuts, and 77 percent of independents believe the plan should include a mix of revenue and spending cuts.” I say that so that I can elicit from the gentleman—I know there is sentiment on your side of the aisle; I know there is sentiment on my side of the aisle. And I told you—and you know the President of the United States believes this as well—that we have an opportunity, a critical time in our history, when we have the makings of a bipartisan agreement, the creation of a bipartisan consensus, that will move us in the direction that you and I know we have to move.

□ 1300

What is holding us up, as I understand it, is that your side believes that these 77 percent of independents and 74 percent of Republicans are not correct, that revenues ought not to be part of this package. Clearly, we agree and have agreed that spending cuts need to be a part of it.

So I ask the gentleman, is there any possibility that these 74 percent of Republicans are correct that, in fact, if we are going to have a successful package, it will be because it is balanced? Because my view is, I tell my friend, that, if we do this, it's going to really create jobs.

Now, we haven't done any jobs bills, we believe, in this Congress. We believe the only jobs bill you really did so far was the patent bill. I know you are going to talk about all these bills that

you did, but we don't think that, because you put “jobs” in the titles, it makes them jobs bills.

But the fact of the matter is that, if we can create confidence in the market, if we can create confidence that we can deal with our fiscal situation in a responsible, bipartisan, collegial way, it will have an extraordinarily positive effect on every household in America, the confidence of America that we can work together in a bipartisan way, and we will stabilize the markets and provide for paying our bills and bringing our deficit and debt down.

So I ask my friend, again, does he believe there is any possibility at this point in time that we can reach a balanced agreement on what is called a “grand design” along the lines of the recommendations of the bipartisan commission's recommendations?

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would say regarding the gentleman's discussion about what happened at the White House this week and my insistence that the President's, at least, statements in that meeting—because we don't know what the details were of his proposal on this so-called “big deal.” My insistence was consistent with our speakers that we not raise taxes, and that's why that construct doesn't work. We don't have the votes on this side of the aisle. I am not supportive of raising taxes on people who are trying to make it right now and can't.

So I would say to the gentleman when he refers to the other groups that have been out there, all of whom he states suggest that somehow we need to raise taxes, what the gentleman is talking about is how are we going to produce more revenues.

We believe, Mr. Speaker, that you produce more revenues by having growth in our economy. We don't believe that you promote growth in the economy by cranking up the government spending machine by taking money from people who earn it, washing it through Washington's bureaucracy, and sending it back out. We don't believe that.

We believe that growth is created through investment, through hard work in the private sector by entrepreneurs, small businessmen and -women, people who want to succeed but want to earn their success and are not waiting for government to grant it to them. So I would say to the gentleman, if the aim is for us to create more revenues, one word in response: It's growth.

I would say to the gentleman as far as his reference to the Gallup Poll and when he says that overwhelmingly people in this country want to have taxes raised as part of the so-called “solution” to our problem—

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield on that, because I didn't say that.

Mr. CANTOR. I will yield to the gentleman when I am finished.

To the gentleman's suggestion that that is where the American public is, I just disagree.

I haven't talked to anybody right now—when we have got unemployment over 9 percent officially, when people are out of work and month after month can't find a job, when small business people are having trouble just keeping the lights on, I don't talk to anybody that says, "Please raise my taxes."

That's what we should be focused on are the hardworking people, the people of this country who want a job, who want to see this economy return to growth. They are the ones who understand that it's cutting taxes; it's cutting the overly burdensome regulatory system in this town that will bring back middle class jobs.

So to the gentleman's suggestion that somehow we have not been talking about jobs in this institution, I know it's not surprising to him that I disagree with that.

Mr. HOYER. It is not.

Mr. CANTOR. Right. Because I say to the gentleman, week after week we brought bills to the floor, yes, that deal with our fiscal situation—that cut spending—because we have got to address that, just like people address it in their homes, their families, their businesses.

But we brought numerous bills week after week to the floor that go to the root of the cause of uncertainty in the business community in this country, and that is Washington's overly aggressive and burdensome regulatory reach. We have got to get back to a growth posture, Mr. Speaker.

That means cut spending, lower taxes and implement a balanced and sensible pro-growth regulatory system as well as, finally, hopefully, returning to a monetary policy that promotes a strong dollar.

Mr. HOYER. First of all, of course, I didn't say anybody wants their taxes raised, including me. I would like to have all the prices for things I buy cut in half, a 50-percent-off sale. We all like that.

I like going and using my credit card—it's so much easier—and that's why credit cards encourage the economy. But you and I both know what happens when you use your credit card: At some point in time you get a bill. The people who sold you the goods or loaned you the money expect you to pay them.

I will tell my friend that I understand what he is saying. We have just come through, arguably, the worst recession that we have experienced since the Great Depression, and it was consistent with economic policies which, by the way, started, as you know, in December of 2007 and in which we lost 8 million jobs.

But the gentleman continues every time to say he wants to have policies which in 1991 and 1993 were argued were policies that were going to grow our economy, expand jobs and have those folks that you talk about do well.

Now, the gentleman misrepresents our position. I want to make it very clear: We are not for asking people who

are trying to make it in America. We are not for asking those who are struggling in America. We are not asking for those who rely on Social Security. We are not asking for those who rely on their Medicare benefits to pay the burden of the spending that we have been involved in over the last decade, which took us from \$5.6 trillion of debt to over \$10 trillion of debt.

We are not asking for those struggling Americans which the gentleman raises as the specter of those we think ought to pay their fair share. Oh, no. We are asking for those who have done extraordinarily well over the last decade, who have made millions per year in the last decade, some billions of dollars over the last decade—oil companies that are now making the biggest profits they have ever made and others—to pay a little more so that we can stabilize the finances of America.

So don't represent that it's Democrats who are asking those struggling small business people—we are not doing that—or those struggling working people in America who, by the way, have been stuck in the mud under the economic policies that were pursued consistent with the 2001 and 2003 economic programs, which have seen a growing disparity between working people and the wealthiest people in America.

Now, we can continue on that path and put on the backs of those struggling people you talk about, my friend, the responsibility to pay for things or we can have a fair and balanced program. That's what the 74 percent in the Gallup Poll want. They don't want their taxes raised.

□ 1310

What they want is a fair and balanced obligation, a fair and balanced participation in contribution to paying the debts of this country that we've incurred, and we've incurred them together. You're not all responsible. We're not all responsible.

Now, on our side of the aisle, as you well know, this deficit was increased by almost 90 percent under the Bush economic policies, far less than that under the Clinton economic policies—as a matter of fact, about half. But that's not the issue. Under both, the debt went up. We're confronted with it; we've got to pay it, and you and I believe not paying it is not an option.

The Chamber of Commerce says clearly that, first, it is critical the U.S. Government not default in any way on its fiscal obligations, and the President of the United States and our side have said, you bet, we don't want to do that. So let's ask all of us to come to the table, and those who can't afford it ought not to be asked, but those who can—those who can—should be asked to do so, not to penalize them but to say we're all in this together. Those who are the best off in America, those corporations like the oil companies that are getting subsidies at this point in time which said they didn't need

subsidies if oil was over \$55 per barrel—they testified in Congress some years ago to that fact. It has been twice that, and we're still giving them subsidies.

All we're saying is that doesn't make sense, and we ought to have a balanced program, and that's what those 74 percent and 77 percent of independents are saying. They're not saying they want their taxes raised. They're not saying we ought to raise taxes and incur more debt. They are saying we ought to pay our bills. They are saying that we ought to have a fair participation by all Americans in meeting this crisis that confronts us.

And I would hope that over the next 3 weeks that we could get to a place where we could come together in a bipartisan way and ask all of us to participate. Those who are able can help us confront this: bring this deficit down and balance our budget. For those who can't but who are working hard to make themselves and their families live a quality of life, we'll help them out. Then I think, as I said, we'll stabilize the economy; we'll grow jobs and we'll have a better country. I would hope we could do that, Mr. CANTOR, and I'm looking forward to it.

Again, I don't know that this cut, cap, and balance will get us there; but as I said, we're not going to get there, clearly, under those provisions between now and August 2. I think the gentleman knows that, and I hope he has some other thoughts in mind, some other plan in mind. Obviously, there have been a number of plans talked about. The President gave a speech about his plan. That was rejected. The gentleman says it wasn't specifically line by line. That's right, because it was rejected before we got there.

Mr. BOEHNER, your Speaker, discussed trying to get a construct. So perhaps you have a plan that is above and beyond the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act that we might see that would be a balanced plan that would help us.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 18, 2011

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday next, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MULVANEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

BELARUS, THE LAST DICTATORSHIP IN EUROPE

(Mr. SHIMKUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, as we're talking about debts and deficits financially, I'm here to talk about a freedom debt and a freedom deficit that's occurring in parts around the world. One